

All I know is ~~Obsession~~ Devotion

(a sermon gone feral)

so much so, I leave claw marks on the altar. The pastor drags me out of the cathedral, one arm still raised to a crucified Jesus in stained glass. I crack it trying to take his place. Light dissipates into shadows as I swallow the sun whole. None left to share. Devoters scream and scatter like children on a playground.

I have a habit of stealing

God for myself—

I am sorry

*Do you feel loyalty for rabid animals, niña? Or have you forgotten
the split ocean you came from?*

When I was nine, I asked to get baptized. My mother didn't understand why I wanted to rid myself of myself completely.

Though she grew up Catholic, her hands were still her own. I told her ~~obsession~~ devotion is not the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly, but the ugly skin snakes must shed in order to devour.

I'm trying

to be like you, mother—but better.

My skin is peeling. *I'll hurry.*

Somewhere between pockets of dry skin and the moment the pastor declared me saved, I threw up blue molten water. Shriveled fingertips grasped for dry land. I told no one.

Praise until sick.

I wash over myself until I am as bottomless as the lake I was dunked in. To lose yourself is an intimate spiral.

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There's a shrine in my head.

On the outside possession takes the form of a 5'5 girl.
Her eyebrows pierced, hair trailing along her spine,
red-crushing eyes, and a tramp stamp in need of touch.

The boy who worshiped me without return once told me he would pluck his heart out of its socket, still attached to its major organs.

“If I could,” he said, “I would show you who it beats for.”

Shoulda, coulda, woulda. How sweet and how still not enough.

Get on your knees—like I do. Hands to heart. Crown toward empty, cracked open sky
Let's see if your sins make me forget mine. Make each stroke slow.

Delirium
comes

in
steps, honey boy.

I looked at him blankly before telling him, “I need more.”
More, more, more—something more edible to grab in my starving, convalescent hands.

All I know is this, I am sorry.

At twenty-two, I am nine. I fish for gaps through perfectly straight teeth. Still, I find,
a smelly tongue, a molar out of place, an ingrown wisdom tooth—a millimeter of falter.
I fill in
cavities in need of root canals, and come out eating rotten apples.

Unholy, holiness. ~~Obsession~~
Devotion.

There's reverence in violation.

Were my sacrifices ever enough?

I am a sermon gone feral